

February 21, 2023

Dear Honorable Members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee,

My name is Holly Sullivan and I am the President of the Connecticut Citizens Defense League. Our organization proudly advocates for the rights of hundreds of thousands of law abiding gun owners in this state and 43,000 members in our organization. I am here today to adamantly oppose HB 5653.

This proposed tax is a direct penalty to individuals who are not responsible for the actions of others. However, the misguided scheme of this bill is far more dangerous than just that and will have contrary impact than it claims. While this proposed bill may feel like it is "doing something", it is directly conflicting with actual common sense implementation of gun safety and will put more Connecticut residents at risk.

Accurate shooting is a skill that requires practice. Safe handling skills and proficiency are developed at the range. Gun owners will often put hundreds of rounds in a day through their firearms developing the muscle memory to ensure that in a stressful situation, they will be accurate. This tax will make practice cost prohibitive.... for some. This proposed bill will absolutely have a disproportionate impact on low-income Connecticut residents. Gun safety will be reduced in the very communities it claims to be supporting.

Sponsors of bills of this nature have stated that Connecticut gun owners must share in the cost of gun violence. Respectfully, gun owners in this state are no less empathetic or human than any other group of people in this state. We do not feel any less pain when we hear of incidents of violence of any sort in our communities. We share in the same financial liabilities as every other resident of this state. The shameful pitting of neighbor against neighbor, owner against non-owner and who owes what will never be a constructive solution to violence in society.

Not only would HB 5653 make Connecticut residents less safe by limiting diligent and responsible practice, it will also result in significantly reduced sales in the state. I can say with absolute confidence that our people are incredibly resolute. Connecticut residents can and will purchase ammunition out of state resulting in an absolute failure of the intention of this bill. Not only will income not be generated by this bill, but taxes currently collected on ammunition sales will no longer be realized. Connecticut gun owners will not be subjugated into financially supporting this politically driven agenda.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*Holly Sullivan*

Holly Sullivan  
President, Connecticut Citizens Defense League  
Southbury, CT